

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07

LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 L-02 NSC-05

PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /090 W

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R 181602Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8642

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY ROME

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 09916

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PLAB, FR

SUBJECT: BERGERON AND THE TUC

1. ANDRE BERGERON, FO SECRETARY GENERAL, SEIZED OPPORTUNITY PRESENTED BY MEETING IN HIS OFFICE (16 APRIL) WITH U.K. AND U.S. LABOR COUNSELORS TO TALK ABOUT TUC. HE MADE TWO REMARKS AND ONE APPEAL.

(A) HE CONTINUES TO REGRET TUC OPPOSITION TO THE COMMON MARKET, WHICH IN TRADE UNION TERMS HAS BEEN ONE OF THE FACTORS THAT HAS PREVENTED ETUC FROM BECOMING AN EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATION WITH A REALISTIC PROGRAM.

(B) "FRANKLY" LEN MURRAY, TUC SECRETARY GENERAL, HAS NOT IMPRESSED HIM VERY MUCH IN INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS IN WHICH JACK JONES, THE HEAD OF TUC INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE, SEEMS TO TAKE THE LEAD AND TO DETERMINE TUC ATTITUDES.

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(C) THE APPEAL CAME IN AN ALMOST PLAINTIVE TONE WHEN BERGERON TURNED TO U.K. LABOR COUNSELOR (BULPITT) AND SAID, "WHAT CAN WE POSSIBLY DO TO HELP TUC UNDERSTAND THE FRENCH TRADE UNION SITUATION?" HE WENT ON TO SAY THAT HE IS BAFFLED BY TUC INSISTENCE THAT LABOR UNITY SHOULD BE THE PRIMARY GOAL OF ALL FRENCH TRADE UNION ORGANIZATIONS. HE ADDED THAT LABOR UNITY IN FRANCE TODAY CAN MEAN ONLY ONE THING, NAMELY, COMMUNIST DOMINATION.

2. BERGERON RECALLED HOW WELL FO DELEGATION WAS RECEIVED BY TUC DURING A RECENT VISIT TO LONDON BUT REMARKED THAT SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS DID NOT IMPROVE TUC'S UNDERSTANDING OF FRENCH SITUATION. HE WOULD LIKE TO TRY ONCE AGAIN, HE SAID, BY INVITING A TUC DELEGATION TO PARIS. THE BEST TIME TO DO THAT OF COURSE WOULD BE AFTER 5 JUNE REFERENDUM, BUT ASKED BULPITT TO ADVISE INFORMALLY TUC AND TO REFLECT PERSONALLY ON AND WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE VISIT.

3. RECOGNIZING THAT LANGUAGE IS A PROBLEM, BERGERON ASKED BULPITT IF HE WOULD AGREE TO TAKE AN ACTIVE PART IN THE PROGRAM OF THE VISIT INCLUDING SERVING AS INTERPRETER. BULPITT AGREED.

4. WITH REGARD TO EAST-WEST TRADE UNION RELATIONS, BERGERON SAID THAT HE HAS RECEIVED REPORTS TELLING HIM THAT TUC LEADERS ARE A GREAT DEAL MORE SUSPICIOUS OF THE SOVIETS THAN THEIR WILLINGNESS TO ENGAGE IN CONTACTS AND EXCHANGE VISITS WITH THEM WOULD SUGGEST. HE WENT ON TO SHAKE HIS HEAD IN APPARENT FRUSTRATION WHETHER TO RELY ON SUCH REPORTS OR ON HIS VISCERAL

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REJECTION OF ANY CONTACTS WITH COMMUNIST TRADE UNIONS
BY TUC OR ANY OTHER WESTERN UNION.

5. COMMENT. WE HAVE THE FEELING THAT BERGERON OVER-STATED, IF NOT OUTRIGHT MISREPRESENTED, TUC VIEWS CONCERNING FO AND THE FRENCH LABOR SCENE. TUC PROBABLY SHARES RESERVATIONS OF OTHER WE NATIONAL CENTERS REGARDING FO'S INTRANSIGENCE IN OPPOSING ANY CONTACTS AT THE CONFEDERATION LEVEL WITH CGT. THEY FIND SUCH ATTITUDE A) UNREALISTIC SINCE IT UNDERMINES TRADE UNION EFFECTIVENESS BOTH AT THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVEL; B) CONTRADICTORY SINCE OF NECESSITY THERE ARE CONTACTS BETWEEN FO AND CGT AT LOWER LEVELS; AND PERHAPS C) COUNTERPRODUCTIVE IN FIGHTING COMMUNISM AS THE EXPERIENCE OF THE CFDT-CGT UNITY OF ACTION AGREEMENT HAS SHOWN.

6. NOT EVERYONE IN FO SHARES BERGERON'S FREEDOM FROM UNCLASSIFIED

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DOUBT ABOUT THE CORRECTNESS OF HIS APPROACH. EVIDENCE OF THIS CAN BE SEEN IN A RECENT STATEMENT MADE BY ANTOINE LAVAL, WHO IS IN CHARGE OF FO INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT, IN LABATT'S HOME SUGGESTING THAT SHOULD THERE BE ANOTHER GENEVA EAST-WEST TRADE UNION CONFERENCE HE WILL ARGUE FOR FO PARTICIPATION. HE ADDED THAT HE HAS COME AROUND TO REALIZING THAT EXPOSURE OF SOVIET POLITICAL MOTIVES BEHIND SUCH CONFERENCES CAN BE MORE EFFECTIVE IF MADE INSIDE THE CONFERENCE THAN IF SYMBOLICALLY COMMUNICATED BY STAYING AWAY FROM IT.

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